

## Health Assessment by Nurses in Industry

TO COMPLY with public demands for more health practitioners, the role of nurses has been expanded to allow them to assume some of the functions previously considered unique possessions of a physician. For roughly a decade some nurses in industry have received special training so that they first were able to take preemployment histories, and in later years they could conduct preemployment medical examinations.

In almost all cases these programs have been highly successful because the university-based training programs provided intensive course work that was given clinical substance by physician-based preceptorships. In the health facility of one manufacturing plant a study was conducted of 402 consecutive health assessments done by registered nurses and a qualified technician. These examiners did 85.1 percent of all health assessments—sharply reducing the physician's workload—and performed well. Almost no significant clinical disorders were missed. Those problems that did arise after employment were such that the preemployment examination would not have detected the deficit. Applicants with severe physical disabilities were appropriately referred to the physician.

### REFERENCES

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## Psychiatric Patients and Work

WITH FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATION requiring greater employment of the handicapped, applicants with physical and emotional limitations are entering the labor force more than ever before. For decades, employers have been apprehensive about personnel with psychiatric problems.

At the large American headquarters of one international business-machine manufacturing corporation, a consulting psychiatrist was available to the medical department three hours per day. Studying 135 employees (some of them self-referred, some referred by others), two- to three-year follow-up showed that 61.7 percent were still with the company. Of these, 10 were rated outstanding, 38 exceeded job requirements, 25 were

meeting job requirements and 4 were not meeting job requirements.

Of 83 employees rated unsatisfactory at the initial referral, 49 were doing satisfactory work at follow-up. The study emphasizes the worth of a full-time medical department that offers psychiatric consultation facilities leading to secondary and tertiary prevention.

In a related review based on a questionnaire study of 161 supervisors in both government and nongovernment employment, it was confirmed that employees seeking help from a psychiatrist are likely to experience varying degrees of negative attitudes from supervisors at work. The advice given to employees in therapy was "Don't tell your boss." The observers' feeling was that dishonesty may be the best policy.

With all illness coming into the open, it is believed that frankness still is the only avenue to total acceptance of an involved person. Employers will learn, in time, that nearly every person, given the opportunity for work and care, will prove effective.

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## Biological Dysrhythmia in Transmeridian Jet Travel

RECENT INVESTIGATION into the changes in physiologic function in humans as a result of jet travel across international time zones has confirmed the findings that the normal cyclic variations in activity in a 24-hour period, such as body temperature and adrenocortical secretions, are indeed disrupted by travel west to east and vice versa. These reflexes are cued by day-night stimuli and adjust the organism so that optimum function is present when needed; unfortunately, the cuing takes days to readjust to a new environment. Of great importance to a traveler is the ability to think clearly, which in his accustomed environment reaches a low point at 4:00 a.m. It becomes clear, then, that a time differential such as that experienced between San Francisco and London could find the business traveler at a relative disadvantage for making important decisions. Fatigue, coupled with paradoxical in-